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Tsurupinsk Children's Home

“GAP” SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Graduate Assistance Program

[An Orphan Smiles, Inc.](#) is very pleased to be able to provide an avenue of hope and relief for many older orphaned children who are soon to “age-out” of the orphanage system.

Tsurupinsk Children's Home is home to 207 physically and mentally handicapped children ages 4 to 18. Tsurupinsk is located in southern Ukraine in the Kherson region approximately 350 miles south of Kiev. All the children have major physical handicaps that make it difficult for them to move around and support themselves (no leg(s), hand(s), etc). 112 children attend school on site. 95 children have severe mental and physical handicaps and never leave their beds.

The statistics for the “Graduates” are staggering:

- Due to a child's “special needs” orphaned status, the opportunity to attend a college or university is very slim, even if finances are available for them.
- Upon aging out of the orphanage, many children have no choice but to turn to the streets if they do not choose to receive vocational training (to learn a basic working trade).
- Out of despair 60% of the girls will turn to prostitution, 70% of the boys will enter a life of crime, 27% of these youth will find work, and very sadly 10% will commit suicide before their 18th birthday.

Ukrainian government supported vocational programs are available to all children who age-out of the orphanage system. The government provides dormitory style housing, food, and \$5.00 per month toward a student's living expenses. However, the monthly stipend is not enough to pay for essential items, such as hygiene items, school supplies, and clothing. Many children are unable to cope and sadly do not complete their training and will turn to crime, prostitution, and other means to get by.

[An Orphan Smiles](#) has developed the **GAP program** for children aging out of the orphanage system. GAP stands for Graduate Assistance Program. An Orphan Smiles is operating this program in conjunction with Tsurupinsk Children's Home.

Program Description and Objectives:

- Find a sponsor for each child who is due to graduate the Internat generally in May of the year they turn 16.

- Maintain sponsorship for grads for one or two years after leaving the Internat. Government operated vocational programs run for one or two years.
- Provide an allowance of \$50 a month for living expenses.
- Keep the grad enrolled in school for the duration of the program.
- Keep the grad safe, off the streets and away from a life of crime.
- Provide the feeling that someone cares about them and their future.

Program Details:

The Gap Sponsorship Program for the graduates of Tsurupinsk is under the direction of Bogdan Bashtoviy who also runs the [Graduate Support Center](#).

Cost:

Sponsorship consists of \$50.00 per month (\$51.80 via paypal) over a period of one or two years.

Check Payments can be mailed to: An Orphan Smiles, Inc., PO Box 175, Kimberton, PA 19442

Paypal payments can be sent to: Paypal@AnOrphanSmiles.org

Expectations:

The students typically attend a monthly meeting on the first Saturday of the month held at the [Graduate Support Center](#). This meeting serves many purposes. The students will sign for and receive their monthly allowance. Students who have not yet mastered budgeting may receive their allowance weekly. Various topics are also covered with handout materials including money management, computer training, employment, housing, safety and medical issues.

Bogdan keeps close contact with the graduates in the program and the students must provide proof of enrollment in school/training and provide copies of grades.

Once or twice a year Bogdan will provide our GAP program coordinator an update on each student enrolled in the program. Generally, photos accompany this progress report.

Correspondence:

Letter writing is such an integral part of this program. The students yearn for this type of interaction with their sponsors who provide them with a tremendous amount of needed encouragement and friendship. We encourage our sponsors to write as often as they wish. An Orphan Smiles has a Translation Team who will translate sponsor's letters. If students write to sponsors, we will gladly translate their letters which will be emailed directly to the sponsor after translation.

Sponsors can send translation request directly to our Translation Request Center at:

Translate@AnOrphanSmiles.org

On average, each translation request will take seven days for completion, and will be emailed back to the sponsor.

Care Packages:

Sending parcels are not a requirement of the Graduate Assistance Program.

However, if sponsors would like to send their student a care package, here are some recommended items:

Keep it simple, standard, and affordable: school supplies, shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, bath towel, washcloth, 6 pk underwear, 6 pk dark socks, lip balm, bottle lotion, brush, roll of toilet paper, box of Kleenex, Stridex acne pads, deodorant, “bars” of laundry soap (Fels-Naptha or equivalent)

*Please make sure that shampoo and lotion bottle lids are tightly in place, and tape caps shut. Please also place shampoo and lotion in zip lock bags, and double-bag them to help eliminate possible leakage while in route.

Special Note - for female students: due to tremendous need, please consider including in each package a pack of 24-32 feminine napkins (no tampons please). Wal-Mart Equate brand offers great prices for “regular” maxi-pads.

Clothing

Although it is not required, please feel free to send New / Like New (no stains, rips, tears, missing buttons, etc) items to your student. Every student is in great need of everything. Please remember the upcoming season and anticipated temperature changes if you desire to send your student clothing.

Please also note, that although the need is great for most clothing items, it is not necessary to provide your child with a complete new wardrobe. The children are known to wear frequently the same clothing item and do not change their clothes often. They also tend to “save” many clothing items for special occasions and then grow out of them. We recommend sending one nice shirt, one sweater, one pair of jeans or pants, etc., at a time.

Suggested clothing ideas based on known student needs:

- Coats
- Gloves, scarf, mittens
- Jeans, pants, athletic pants / sweat suits
- Sweaters, hoodies, thermals
- Sturdy shoes, snow boots
- 1-piece swimsuits for girls, swim trunks for boys, beach towel, shorts, t-shirts

Items to Avoid Sending

- Chocolate and caramels
- Anything that has the ability to melt
- War toys, toy guns, or related games
- Gum
- Poker/gambling games
- Hair conditioner
- Perishable snack foods (no yogurt covered nuts, chocolate, pudding cups, meat / dairy products).

*Pre-packaged Trail mix, nuts, and hard candies are OK to send.

Shipping A Package

Please refer to the An Orphan Smiles, Inc. website (<http://www.AnOrphanSmiles.org>) for shipping instructions. You may choose whichever shipping method is best for you to ship your package to Tsurupinsk c/o Kiev Orphanage 12. Be sure to obtain a tracking number from the shipping company when you ship your package. This tracking number will keep you informed of when your package is received by your student.

For your convenience, we have already prepared a package shipping label (below). Please print and affix to your box with clear packaging tape.

Please contact Info@AnOrphanSmiles.org for a “Tsurupinsk Internal Box Number”. At your request, a specific box number can be assigned to your package and returned to you (in label format) so that you can print and affix it to your box. At the time when your package has been received, the orphanage director will account for the boxes that have arrived, by reporting back to An Orphan Smiles the special assigned box numbers.

Additional Monetary Donations:

[An Orphan Smiles](#) does not encourage sponsors to regularly send additional funding beyond the \$50 monthly assistance. Part of the intent of the program is for the students to learn to budget their money. However, small monetary gifts for special occasions like Birthdays, Christmas, Graduation, or possibly a pair of shoes or school supplies are reasonable and are acceptable for sponsors to consider. A general donation to the [Graduate Support Center](#) is also another way to help these children.

Thank You...

We wish to sincerely thank you very for your interest and support in sponsoring a student in their vocational studies through [GAP-Tsurupinsk!](#)

If you have not already joined our An Orphan Smiles Yahoo Group List please send an email to:

An_Orphan_Smiles-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

If there are any questions about this program, please feel free to contact us at:

Program Contact: Leslie Reinhold

LeslieR@AnOrphanSmiles.org

**GAP – Tsurupinsk Mailing Label c/o Kiev Orphanage 12
(scroll down)**



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